

[IMAGE]

## **A Hot Way to Ease Low Back Pain**

If you've ever had low back pain, you know that your doctor of chiropractic may try several different procedures to make you feel better. While some chiropractors may simply adjust your back, others may offer a variety of treatments ranging from heat to certain exercise routines. A recent study compared the effectiveness of these other treatments, and found that a combination of heat and exercise worked better than either therapy by itself.

Scientists examined 100 people with acute low back pain and randomized them into one of four groups. The first group wore a disposable low-level heat wrap eight hours per day for five consecutive days; the second group performed a series of flexion and extension exercises at various times for five days; the third group used a combination of exercise and heat wraps; and the final group received an educational booklet. At baseline and other intervals, the patients were examined to determine their functional ability, along with the intensity of their low back pain and any relief the therapies offered.

By the time the study concluded, patients who received the combination of heat and exercise showed significant improvements in function, disability and pain relief compared to the other groups. In some instances, the improvements were up to 175 percent greater; no adverse effects were reported among patients using the heat-exercise combination.

If you suffer from low back pain, talk to your doctor of chiropractic about what treatments may work best for you. For more information on low back and the types of therapies doctors of chiropractic use, visit [www.chirofind.com](http://www.chirofind.com).

Mayer JM, Ralph L, Look M, et al. Treating acute low back pain with continuous low-level heat wrap therapy and/or exercise: a randomized controlled trial. *The Spine Journal* 2005;5:395-403.

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